

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 00767 150451Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INR-10 /023 W
-----019526 150452Z /13

O 150414Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4938
CINCPAC HONOLULU

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 00767

FOR IOR, IBS, IPS, CINCPAC FOR USIA ADVISOR

EO 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: SOMALIA/ETHIOPIA CLASH MEDIA REACTION

1. THE CHRISTCHURCH PRESS IN ITS CURRENT SERIES OF EDITORIALS DEALING WITH INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, FEB. 15, COMMENTED ON THE SOMALIA-ETHIOPIA CLASH AND RUSSIA'S PART IN THE CONFLICT. UNDER THE HEADING "SOMALIA, ETHIOPIA AND RUSSIA," IT SAID:
2. "IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE SOVIET UNION, THE WAR OF NATIONALISMS ON THE HORN OF AFRICA MIGHT EVENTUALLY HAVE PLAYED ITSELF TO A STANDSTILL....
3. "WHAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS DONE IS TO PLACE A VAST ARSENAL ESTIMATED TO BE WORTH A BILLION DOLLARS AT THE DISPOSAL OF ETHIOPIA. IT MUST BEAR A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEATHS, DESTRUCTION AND MISERY WHICH WILL PROBABLY RESULT. THE FACT THAT SOMALI FORCES WILL BE FIGHTING WITH SOME OF THE ARMS LEFT OVER FROM A FEW MONTHS AGO WHEN SOMALIA AND THE SOVIET UNION WERE FRIENDS SIMPLY ILLUSTRATES THE WAYS OF COMMUNIST ARMS MERCHANTS.
4. "CUBAN AND SOVIET FORCES HAVE GONE TO ETHIOPIA,

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DEMONSTRATING ONCE AGAIN THE ROLE THAT CUBA APPEARS TO BE PLAYING IN SOVIET AFRICAN POLICY. THE ABILITY OF THE SOVIET UNION TO SHIFT ARMS AND MEN FROM ITS SHORES HAS WORRIED NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION OFFICIALS AND MAY BE DESIGNED TO IMPRESS OTHER AFRICAN STATES.

5. "TO THE SOVIET UNION, ETHIOPIA, BECAUSE OF ITS SIZE

AND POSITION, AND BECAUSE IT HAS A MARXIST GOVERNMENT, HAS ASSUMED CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE. STRATEGICALLY, ETHIOPIA'S IMPORTANCE WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY LESS WITHOUT ACCESS TO THE RED SEA. THAT PART OF ETHIOPIA WHICH TOUCHES THE RED SEA IS ERITREA, LARGE AREAS OF WHICH ARE IN REBEL HANDS. ONE CERTAIN RESULT OF SOVIET INTERVENTION WILL BE SOVIET BACKING FOR CONTROL BY ADDIS ABABA OF ERITREA.

6. "WHETHER THE ETHIOPIAN MILITARY DRIVE, ONCE FULLY UNDER WAY, WILL STOP AT THE BORDERS OF ETHIOPIA, IS ONE OF THE SIGNIFICANT FACTORS. THE SOMALIS HAVE MADE CONSIDERABLE TERRITORIAL GAINS IN THE OGADEN AREA, COLONEL MENGISTU, OF ETHIOPIA, HAS SAID THAT ETHIOPIA DOES NOT INTEND TO CROSS ITS BORDERS. THE DECISION MIGHT NOT REST WITH HIM ALONE, BUT MIGHT DEPEND ON SOVIET INTENTIONS" ANDERSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, DISPUTES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978WELLIN00767
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780069-0010
Format: TEL
From: WELLINGTON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780250/aaaabqcw.tel
Line Count: 78
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e2cdf2d8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3581747
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOMALIA/ETHIOPIA CLASH MEDIA REACTION
TAGS: SOPN, PBOR, ET, SO
To: USIA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e2cdf2d8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014